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Henrico County School Board Monthly Meeting, Thursday, February 26, 2026

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[00:02:18] I would like to welcome everyone to the February 26, 2026 monthly meeting of the Henrico County School Board. At this time, I want to note Mrs. Shea's physical absence from today's monthly meeting. Mrs. Shea previously notified board members of a request to participate electronically from a remote location due to a medical condition that prevents her physical attendance. Our school board policy P2-04-006, electronic participation in meetings from remote locations requires a

[00:02:57] majority vote of board members present at the primary or central meeting location to allow a board member to participate in a meeting from a remote location. Per the school board policy, do I hear a motion? I move that the school board approve Mrs. Shea's participation from a remote location. Motion by Mrs. Atkins. Do I have a second? Second. Seconded by Mrs. Kinsella. I will now proceed with a roll call vote. Mrs. Kinsella? Aye. Mr. Young? Aye. Mrs. Atkins? Aye. And I vote

[00:03:33] aye. Mrs. Shea's request has been approved. This meeting is being live streamed on the HCPS website. We'll begin our meeting with a roll call. When I call your name, please verbally indicate your presence. Mrs. Kinsella? Present. Mr. Young? Present. Mrs. Atkins? Present. Mrs. Shea? Present.

[00:03:53] Thank you. Please let the record reflect that a quorum of the board is physically present and Mrs. Shea is participating electronically. I ask Mrs. Shea to verbally note if she needs to leave the meeting

and subsequently verbally note when she returns. We will now move on to the approval of the agenda. Is there a motion to approve the agenda? I move that the school board approve the agenda for today's meeting. Motion by Mr. Young. Do I have a second? Second. Seconded by Mrs. Kinsella.

[00:04:26] Roll call. Mrs. Kinsella? Aye. Mr. Young? Aye. Mrs. Atkins? Aye. Mrs. Shea? Aye. And I vote aye. the ayes have it the agenda is approved dr cashwell thank you good evening members of the board to our staff and visitors here this evening we will begin our meeting with um the pledge of allegiance which will be led by students and follow that with a performance highlight and we are so pleased this evening to welcome students from glenn allen elementary school their principal melissa hawk was prudent will come to the podium and introduce the students who will then come to the stage

[00:05:02] and lead us in the pledge if she would please come forward thank you dr cashwell and school board i'd like to bring my cubs up to the front we have sully benton sam your bullock luke white riley newton and aubry lemon and i'd also like to introduce our chair for our house leader our fourth grade teacher miss abigail day we're thrilled to have you here members of the audience

[00:05:34] would you please stand as you are able for the pledge of allegiance and if you would please

[00:06:02] remain standing for a brief moment of silence and that concludes our moment of silence you may be seated how about a round of applause for our fantastic students if they would pause for a photo and then board members and i are going to make our way to the front for our next item which is our performance highlight in which we will hear from the string ensemble at hungry creek middle

[00:06:33] school all right good evening mr chair members of the board dr cashwell colleagues and guests My name is Christopher Mosley. I am the Education Specialist for Performing Arts, and it is my pleasure to introduce this evening for our performance highlight

[00:07:13] the Hungry Creek Middle School Small String Ensemble under the direction of Mr. Truman Chancy. Mr. Chancy is in his third year teaching at Hungry Creek. He also teaches strings at Cuiakason Middle School, and tonight the students will perform two selections: allegro moto from symphony number one by mozart and an arrangement of lift every voice and sing by bob phillips tonight we have an attendance they're very proud principal dr beth terrier

[00:07:47] i saw her please stand so that we can recognize you all right thank you so much and let's welcome

[00:07:55] to our stage the small strings ensemble from hungary creek middle school again to our students

[00:14:15] from hungary creek middle school this evening we are pleased to recognize the school board as we celebrate February as school board appreciation month as tokens of appreciation members of the board are receiving beautiful and functional charcuterie boards from the career and technical education students and teachers at Godwin high school under the direction of their teacher Mr.

[00:14:40] Shane waters students leveraged woodworking and manufacturing techniques as well as advanced equipment like a cnc and laser engraver on either side of the board is the cte logo and the newly adopted hcps logo in addition to these wonderful tokens of appreciation i will now share a proclamation from governor spanberger in your honor whereas public schools play a critical role in virginia by supporting the well-being of students and providing equitable opportunities to students of all backgrounds

and whereas the future of the commonwealth depends on public schools as as they teach, challenge, and nurture tomorrow's leaders.

[00:15:20] And whereas school board members are elected to represent the interests of students, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders of public schools. And whereas school boards play a vital role in ensuring that students across the Commonwealth have access to high quality, rigorous public education and are best positioned to uphold educational excellence in Virginia schools.

[00:15:44] And whereas school boards are the governing bodies responsible for the oversight, success, and effectiveness of school systems across the Commonwealth. And whereas school board members work with parents, businesses, education professionals, and other community members to create a shared vision of success for students.

[00:16:04] And whereas these decisions affect the present and future lives of children and chart a path to prepare all students to be competitive in a local, state, national, and global future ready economy. And whereas School Board Member Appreciation Month acknowledges the contributions, dedication, and service of Virginia's local school board members.

[00:16:28] Now, therefore, I, Abigail Spanberger, do hereby recognize February, 2026 as School Board Appreciation Month in the Commonwealth of Virginia. And I call this observance to the attention of our citizens. Chair Irving, members of the board, we're grateful for your commitment, your thoughtful deliberations and decisions that affect the community and your dedication to our students, families, and staff of Henrico County Public Schools.

[00:16:55] Thank you.

[00:17:12] - Thank you, Mrs. Cox. In that same vein, the school board would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge a crucial, but often overlooked member of our team. In recognition of the school board clerk appreciation week, which was last week, Friday, last week, February 16th through the 20th, Please join me in welcoming Ms. Tiffany Burton to the dais.

[00:17:41] In addition to receiving her own charcuterie board from the CTE students and a bouquet on behalf of the school board, we wanna take this opportunity to publicly acknowledge all of Mrs. Burton's hard work.

[00:18:02] Your job managing complex schedules, maintaining crucial records, preparing and organized meetings, supporting all of us on the board and serving as a connection point for the Henrico community requires professionalism, discretion and an unwavering attention to detail.

[00:18:18] Thank you, Ms. Burton, for your service in this essential role and for your support. It helps foster success for Henrico students and the Henrico community.

[00:19:51] - All right, now we will form the recognition of Irish American Heritage Month. Whereas the Irish American community stands a diverse representation of historical and cultural contributions with local national and global impact and whereas vital contributions to the fields of business and industry the arts entertainment civil service and politics have made possible by Irish Americans who sacrificed and preserved through hardship and adversity with strength and resilience and whereas citizens are

[00:20:28] encouraged to participate in activities that recognize appreciate and celebrate the cultural diversity and significant contributions made by Irish Americans and whereas Henrico County Public

Schools and the Henrico community recognize and embrace our Irish American community that continues to shape and strengthen our schools, our country, our county, and our world. Now therefore be it proclaimed that the School Board of Henrico County Public Schools recognizes May, March, 2026 as Irish American Heritage Month and encourages observance and celebration to the attention of our citizens recognized by the school board of Henrico County Public Schools

[00:21:07] this 26th day of February 2026. We will now go with the recognition of music in our schools month. Music in our schools month whereas music education is part of a well-rounded learning experience for every student and helps shape the way they understand themselves and the world around them and whereas the National Association of Music Merchants Foundation has named Henrico County public schools a national leader in music education for 26 consecutive years and whereas national music in our school month is an opportunity to celebrate the many ways our

[00:21:47] students access and engage with music in our schools now therefore be it proclaimed that the school board of henrico county public schools recognizes march 2026 as music in our schools month recognized by the school board of henrico county public schools this 26th day of february 2026. thank you mr young we will now move on to recognition of women's history month women's history month whereas women around the world have made historic contributions to the

[00:22:19] growth and strength of nations and communities in countless ways and whereas american women of every race class and ethnic background served as early leaders in the forefront of every major progressive social change movement in the united states and whereas women continue to excel as business leaders politicians civil servants members of the military and heads of other career

[00:22:51] community and family organizations and whereas women including pocahontas marie curie rosa parks florence nightingale and sandra day o'connor were trailblazers who made significant contributions to history and our world and whereas henrico county public schools and the henrico community are home to outstanding female role models who continue to shape and make history in their own

[00:23:26] right now therefore be it proclaimed that the school board of henrico county public schools recognizes march 2026 as women's history month and encourages our citizens to celebrate the strong women who strengthen our families schools and the larger community recognized by the school board of Henrico County Public Schools this 26th day of February 2026.

[00:24:06] Thank you Mrs. Atkins. I will now move on to the recognition of Youth Art Month. Yes, Youth Art Month. Whereas art education provides significant educational benefits to all students and whereas art education develops students creative potential and improves problem solving and critical thinking skills. And, whereas, art education sparks sensitivity to beauty, order, and other expressive qualities, and also gives students a deeper understanding of

[00:24:40] multicultural values and beliefs. And, whereas, the residents of Virginia have joined state and national art associations in supporting the students and teachers of our community, many of whom are artists themselves. Now therefore, be it proclaimed that the School Board of Henrico County Public Schools recognizes March 2026 as Youth Art Month, recognized by the School Board of Henrico County Public Schools this 26th day of February 2026. Thank you, Mrs. Kinsella. We'll

[00:25:15] now turn to Dr. Cashwell. Thank you. The next item on the agenda is the Henrico Highlight, which is the time each month when we showcase an innovative learning activity or program from our schools. Tonight we visit Echo Lake Elementary School where students are using critical thinking, problem solving, and creativity to bring art and animation to life. Take a look.

[00:25:45] Hello, my name is Murph. It is nice to meet you. I'm called a duck. I live in Washington. My favorite food is mangoes i hope you enjoyed learning a little bit about me you'll push the clay down when you attach it and wriggle it i came up with an idea after seeing some projects online about bobbleheads i thought oh i love bobbleheads they're so nostalgic so i thought about it and then i thought wouldn't it be cool if we could take the bobblehead and

[00:26:22] actually make it talk and the kids came up with their own character based on what they loved or maybe it could be a character that they love from a book for a movie whatever they wanted to do i like how some of the anime characters have cat ears so i decided like an anime cat girl because i thought it would be cute i picked the panda because i thought it was kind of cool to make and then there's a little top hat on top she has a little koala hat on because

[00:26:59] she is the koala kid it's like a robot that's programmed to be a singer you're going to have to make them to match and you're going to score and then i really had them zone in on the details because that's sort of like going to make their character shine and they did a beautiful job painting them too one of her past students made a panda and i was like why not make a panda it it looks easy. It was not easy. You had to use a lot of white and sometimes that overlapped the white with the black so it turned gray so I had to use another coat of white. I wanted to make a

[00:27:32] taffy cat but I also wanted to add some different colors in the mix. I didn't want to make him look funny but I wanted him to be a funny character. You made your character this lovely bobblehead so we just want to make your bobblehead talk. Lauren Greenberg is our ILC and she came in and taught the kids how to do AI and Adobe which was really fun I'd taken a class like a micro credential and using AI but it really didn't go into this part of it they got it like that and they like doing it all the animation part that was

[00:28:10] fun we had this like animated mouth over our bobble head and then we just recorded the voice and put it on there. - All right, do it. - Hello, my name is Victoria. - What?

[00:28:32] - That looks so weird. - Yeah, it actually, it looks pretty good. - I was like, whoa, that's cool and funny. I'm called an armadillo. I live in a den. My favorite foods are bugs and fruits. - I just thought it'd be interesting, like with the shell.

[00:28:50] it's not like a really known animal like when you think of animals you think of armadillo i made it like a higher voice because i think anime characters have higher voices i am called the hacker i live in japan i really wanted to make it funny i added the word clay a bunch of times in it some of the things i enjoy doing are eating clay and eating bath baths there was also a lot of student ownership in this project because they got to choose their character and then from that they made it with clay and then they painted and then the ai part came in and they had to write their

[00:29:29] scripts so and we had all these wonderful disciplines in in art because guess what art is connected to everything what a fun project i especially like that students are learning about responsible ways to use artificial intelligence at school but there was nothing artificial about last month's snow and ice with more than three inches of ice creating hazards in school parking lots and on sidewalks the hcp

facilities team worked many long cold hours to get buildings ready for schools to reopen tonight part of henrico celebrates the dedicated teams

[00:30:09] who put picks and plows to pavement following winter storm fern take a look

[00:30:33] is disrespectful 35 years never saw anything like this before each day it goes on and you get the melting and refreezing it's almost like the ice is like glue sticking to the concrete i got a good crew and you just got to do what you got to do get it done back breaking work

[00:31:11] really is seeing ice this thing seeing people bent over with hammers with chisels and see how hard it was to move one ten foot ten square foot section of sidewalk and then to take three steps back and

[00:31:41] go oh my god they've got to do the whole entire thing thank you thank you thank you i i know it It was horrible, horrible work, but everybody just did great on all of our sites.

[00:32:00] We truly appreciate our amazing facilities team. Without them, we would probably still have ice and snow at some of our campuses.

[00:32:16] I also want to give a special snowstorm shout out to our bus drivers and supervisors in the transportation department who monitored road conditions and adjusted bus routes. AND LET'S NOT FORGET OUR PRINCIPALS, OUR TEACHERS, AND THE DIVISION OF LEARNING TEAM WHO PREPARED AND DISTRIBUTED INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES TO SUPPORT REMOTE LEARNING, AS WELL AS THE SCHOOL NUTRITION SERVICES STAFF WHO DISTRIBUTED MORE THAN 1,000 MEALS.

[00:32:41] AND FINALLY, A BIG THANKS TO OUR COMMUNICATIONS TEAM WHO MAKES SURE THAT OUR STUDENTS AND FAMILY AND STAFF STAY INFORMED OF SCHOOL CLOSURES AND OTHER IMPORTANT NEWS. The collaboration and support required during inclement weather often go unseen.

[00:32:57] And tonight I want you to know that the school board, our community, and I know how hard you work each and every day, and we are so incredibly proud and grateful to all employees, our hearts of Henrico.

[00:33:13] That completes our highlights for this evening. I'll second Dr. Cashwell, we are incredibly thankful for our folks on behalf of the board. incredibly thankful. We'll now proceed with the public forum. This is a time when citizens are invited to address the school board. Now we will proceed with the mission statement of Henrico County Public Schools. Mrs. Atkins, could you please read it? Henrico County Public Schools

[00:33:47] mission statement. Henrico County Public Schools, through engagement with our families and community, equips students with the knowledge and skills to be ready for life and a successful future. Thank you, Mrs. Atkins. Now, the next item on the agenda is the public forum. This is a time when citizens are invited to address the school board on any matter of concern about the school division. Citizens have signed up in advance and will be given three minutes to address the school board. Speakers will be called to speak in the order in which they have signed up and may not relinquish their spot to someone else.

[00:34:27] We ask that each speaker come to the microphone and clearly state their name and school affiliation, if applicable, and the subject of the remarks before speaking. After stating your name, please place the number you were given in the cart near the podium. Speakers must present their remarks to the school board, not the audience, and may provide copies of their comments to the school board clerk.

[00:34:48] The use of obscenity or defamation is strictly prohibited and will be ruled out of order. To assist you in tracking your time, there is a timekeeping system displaying the elapsed time on the screen. Speakers will also receive a notice from me when the time has expired. The school board is here today to hear from you.

[00:35:05] We will not be responding to speakers' concerns or questions during the public forum. However, a Henrico staff member will follow up with speakers. Stakeholders have also had the opportunity to provide written comment through an online form in advance of the meeting. Those comments are shared with school board members prior to the meeting and posted in board docs.

[00:35:24] Equal consideration and attention will be given to both written and in-person comments. We appreciate your attendance here this evening and for providing your input. The first speaker is speaker number one.

[00:35:47] Good evening. My name is Lauren Galloway. I teach at Skipwith Elementary and reside in the Three Chop District.

[00:36:03] It saddens and disappoints me that I continually have to come and speak to you all about the same things. It angers me that I read about these things happening at schools in other parts of the county in a local online news source. Yes, I am once again talking about school building maintenance.

[00:36:19] about students being in classrooms in our cafeteria with no heat, no AC, ceiling tiles covered in mold and crashing to the floor. I've printed pictures and I will leave them here for you to see. I am not an unreasonable person. I know that the heat goes out in a cold stack, that the AC might not work during a heat wave. Sometimes roofs leak. However, these are not random occasional instances. This is a persistent problem. Every August and September, our buildings are without AC across the county. Every January and February, our buildings are without heat

[00:36:53] across the county. County administration is full of reasons why. We're missing the parts. The system can't keep up when it's cold. We only have three certified technicians. Respectfully, I don't care. I don't care anymore. It has been years. They're no longer reasons. They're excuses. All classrooms on the bus loop side of the annex at Skipwood have mold growing in the ceiling tiles of their bathrooms because we have a leaking roof. Again, this has been years. Several times this school year and last year, tiles have come crashing down. Twice in the past two weeks, ceiling tiles have

[00:37:28] crashed to the floor just seconds after a student has left the bathroom. Can you imagine? You are so incredibly lucky no children have been hit yet. As a reminder, the pictures are in the basket for your reference. On February 9th, 200 students were relocated to our main building because the annex had no heat and it was 15 degrees outside the heat is currently working the entire school was affected as classes had to double up and lamps were pushed into classrooms parents were not notified until 10 30 a.m four hours after it was discovered that the heat was not working several teachers reached out to parents around 7 30 a.m when it became clear that communication

[00:38:07] to parents was not a priority we later had our wrists slapped by our principal and henrico's spokesperson we are not allowed to communicate facility issues to parents there have been multiple instances over the years when our school was without water heat or ac and parents were never notified or notified inexcusably late i would know i'm a parent we don't trust you teacher outcry carries no urgency

henrico county public schools puts the safety of its students and staff first and is committed to creating a secure environment where students and staff can feel safe as they

[00:38:42] focus on teaching and learning this is a farce henrico county puts the optics of safety first parents pay attention speak up these situations are not unique to skip with and they are just the most recent in a long line thank you speaker number one speaker number two good evening chair members of the board and superintendent thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight my name is

[00:39:19] stephanie bell and i'm here as a parent and community member as a member of this community Sanston is my home. I grew up here. I attended Donahoe Elementary, Fairfield Middle, and then the Verina Technical Center. This is my home. This is our county. I came here tonight to speak on behalf of the students who learn differently and families who need options that actually work. I'm speaking in reference to Henrico Virtual Academy and the closure of the K through 2 grade levels. Across the county, children are struggling with mental and emotional health. Nearly one in five children ages 3 to 17, have been diagnosed with a mental, emotional, or behavioral condition. Anxiety

[00:39:59] affects many students, often at the beginning of their elementary school careers. And ADHD impacts millions nationwide. When children feel unsafe, overwhelmed, or overstimulated, learning suffers. Henrico Virtual Academy is producing real results. In our combined K-1 classroom, our students have shown continuous improvement across all subjects. Last year, 100% of the first graders advanced to second grade reading on grade level, and kindergarteners reached first grade reading proficiency. This year, students identified as high-risk readers

[00:40:35] have already shown measurable gains. English language learners, developmentally delayed students, and gifted learners are all making documented progress because instruction is tailored to the child. Families are choosing HVA as a source of their education for real reasons.

[00:40:54] safety concerns, bullying, mental health needs, and the need for flexibility. Yet families are increasingly pushed towards paid virtual programs or in-person learning. Access to safe, effective learning environments should not depend on income. We recognize HVA as part of the solution to student mental health, safety, and academic performance.

[00:41:16] My proposal is that we keep HVA open, or at least the K-2 classes open, while we allow the kindergartners that were accepted for next year to actually attend, then have that be the last kindergarten class to pass through HVA. This allows the kids that are currently enrolled to move up to their next grade levels.

[00:41:34] As it stands, we have left our families with very few feasible options for their children's education with this closure. I have a lot more that I actually wrote, but I did notice the core values while we were sitting here.

[00:41:52] AND I DO FEEL LIKE WE ARE LETTING THE STUDENTS DOWN AS FAR AS OUR CORE VALUES GO WITH THIS CLOSURE. SO I JUST WANTED TO POINT THAT OUT. FAMILIES, YOU KNOW, IF YOU ACTUALLY TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT HENRIKA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS STAND FOR, THAT'S NOT IT. THANK YOU.

[00:42:14] THANK YOU. SPEAKER 2. SPEAKER 3. MY NAME IS JORDAN CARAM, AND I HAVE A STUDENT WHO ATTENDS J.R. TUCKER HIGH SCHOOL. ON 1-23, the students exercised their First Amendment rights, and the school's response was lackluster.

[00:42:38] My primary concerns are the lack of communication by the school and unnecessary escalation by the school. When I raised these concerns to the principal, Mr. Raymond, he was not receptive. The kids were told ahead of time that they could protest if they remained on school grounds. Their plan was to use the parking lot adjacent to Parham Road. The day of, the school with no warning changed their mind. They said the kids could protest as long as they did it where no one could see. And a protest that no one can see is no protest at all. When some of the children chose to go ahead with their original plan, the school escalated. By the time I arrived, after my student texted me, there was a line of police threatening the children with arrest if they

[00:43:17] return to the place of learning they attend every day. When questioned, Mr. Raymond said that it was because being there where the children were was unsafe. This begs the question, if it was so unsafe, why was the threat of police violence used to keep them there? The police said if the kids returned to school property, which does include the parking lot, they'd be arrested. When I spoke to the administrators, I learned the kids were, in fact, allowed to retrieve their cars. They didn't tell the kids that, so I did. When the kids tried to do that, an officer, who I later learned was the SRO, yelled that they were trespassing, demanded they remove themselves from the vehicle, etc., until I informed the officer of the admin's decision, at which point she informed me that

[00:43:55] she wasn't trying to stop them from leaving, despite the fact that she clearly was. I should also point out that the white children had no problem getting to their vehicles. It was only the brown and black children that were harassed. Regardless, why didn't the school ensure that the police knew what was going on and tell them and the students? Ambiguity leads to tragedy.

[00:44:12] Mr. Raymond said that it was because he was too busy. I suggest that this kind of reckless disregard for safety is unacceptable, no matter how busy he was. Finally, administrators assured me there'd be no punishments that would be given to the students for protesting. Yet in the following weeks, the principal has said the opposite. When I tried to get clarity from Mr.

[00:44:31] Raymond, he was evasive. This has led to a situation where the children can't trust the administration. The principal insists that the kids just need to talk to him, but because he's completely deaf to their concerns, they see him as a threat, not as a resource. I'll end by contrasting the events of that day with the events of last week. The students were allowed to execute their plan, the same plan they had before. They went and protested next to Parham. The school didn't call the cops. The staff clearly communicated to them. The children protested. Then they went about their day. There was no problems. So clearly the school is capable of doing better if they try. What I'd ask is that they begin by unambiguously stating that the students who protest will not face

[00:45:08] consequences as they said they wouldn't. They need to refrain from calling police and needlessly escalating when there's no need for it. In short, they need to prove to the kids that the school is on their side. I've addressed this body many times on different issues and I've always been impressed by your professionalism and empathy and I hope that we can get more of that today. Thank you.

[00:45:28] Speaker number three. Speaker number four. Good evening members of the board. I came here this evening to discuss building maintenance issues with the board and make sure that you all are aware. My name is Aaron Billings. I reside in the Tuckahoe District. I have a daughter at Carver Elementary and a son at Quiaxin Middle School. And I'd like to invite the board to envision holding this meeting in a room that's around 40 degrees or so. Probably wouldn't be very comfortable.

[00:46:03] And neither are some of the kids at Carver. Some of these rooms are unacceptably cold. And as a previous speaker already mentioned this evening, there are some critical building maintenance issues. We have reports of teachers teaching wearing heated coats and caps in the classroom, of students being crammed into the gym, multiple classes combined. Not a great learning environment, really. A couple of folks have already made mention of our boards up here. The vision to empower every learner to put students' focus first doesn't ring too true, thinking about the

[00:46:38] conditions in that school. In addition, some of these rooms are reported to have gotten down into the 30s at night, that begs the question of other damage that might be occurring. If budgets are already tight and buildings are allowed to get that cold, water freezes at 32. So you might have pipe damage. You might have other things going on. Fixing these issues should be more important to the board than it seems to be, and it should become a budgetary priority. I would encourage you folks to think about that and consider it. I'd also consider you to further evaluate the playground at Carver as a second topic. It is reportedly boarded off right now due to maintenance

[00:47:18] issues and poor conditions out there. There used to be a QR code out on that playground. It was located on one of the poles nearby. I myself used it to report maintenance issues a couple of times and nothing was ever done about it. A bridge that it's like a rope bridge essentially on that playground rusted out and corroded to the point that it was unsafe to use. And so I asked the why this school playground is allowed to get to this condition.

[00:47:46] I've been to other elementary school playgrounds in the district, those up near Short Pump, Wyndham areas. They would never be allowed to get like this, so I wonder why it's acceptable at Carver. I don't think that it is, by the way.

[00:48:02] Lastly, as a topic to squeeze in before my time is done, my son recently reported to me just the other day that he is seeing evidence of misuse of computers in the schools. He has witnessed several students at Quiochison Middle School playing a game entitled Five Nights at Epstein's.

[00:48:21] I don't necessarily need to tell you or describe to you what that title implies. It's a pretty disgusting thing. I briefly looked it up and I would encourage you to use caution in looking it up on your own computers. I also received a note from another mother this evening about her son viewing pornography on school computers. So just want to bring that to your attention. Thank you. Thank you, speaker number four. Speaker number five. Good evening. My name is Lauren Daniels. I am a mother of a second grader at Twin Hickory Elementary School, which

[00:48:58] is in the Three Chop district. I'm a member of the PTA at my son's school, a donor to HCPS, and a room parent for the past three years. My child has benefited from Twin Hickory's amazing teachers, gifted program, and phenomenal commitment to diversity in education. I'm addressing the school board tonight with concerns regarding the lack of heat in my child's classroom and classrooms across the county and the lack of transparency. I'll begin with a timeline of events, go into my research throughout that time, and then anonymous staff testimony. On or around December 1st, the HVAC system was not working in my child's class. That following Sunday, he mentioned he needed additional

[00:49:33] warm clothing items as he was cold. I contacted immediate leadership on December 8th. They stated they were working with maintenance to get the heat up and running. After conversations with neighbors and classmates guardians i decided to escalate to the school board on december 13th via email and public comments noted in meeting minutes from december 18th with no response on february 9th we

received a parent square communication from the immediate leadership team regarding the lack of heat which was appreciated as no communication had been made by the county nor the immediate school and i was relying on an eight-year-old's account of the heating situation having not heard back anything from the school board i sent a second email on february 18th where after stating

[00:50:11] they didn't get the email they would look into hvac issues in summary the heating has not been working or working on and off since december 1st to date that is 87 calendar days or around 50 business days without heat resolution or communication regarding this aside from one parent square posting from my research using media outlets and my personal deep dive hvac malfunctioning is not a new issue um i've provided you all with a pocket list of schools in my immediate district that i contacted on my day off february 24th i called stating my name my concerns at my immediate elementary school and asked if they are also having heating issues you

[00:50:49] will notice only three of the 13 schools responded no two of those 10 also noting ac issues at the time i have heard from teachers across the county and promised they would remain anonymous themes are as follows classroom temps plummeting to the low 50s some of these children's classrooms have children who are nonverbal and can't communicate their needs or that they are cold having been asked not to contact parents regarding these non-working systems and then having fears moving forward regarding the air conditioning systems i urge everyone on the board and at home to look into your specific schools i urge you to follow the virginia law that was passed in july of 2025

[00:51:27] that i've provided a copy of regarding the hvac system that increases the transparency for parents and guardians i was informed that many systems are very dated have various work orders out in the very difficult to work school dude app some ranging from weeks to months to years on issues like the dehumidifying systems at area high schools i look forward to any response that i may receive that is actionable measurable and a plan with transparency thank you for your time thank you speaker number five speaker number six speaker number six speaker number seven

[00:52:06] good evening my name is ellie mora and i'm a proud parent of two students on her vocal virtual academy one in kinder and one in fourth grade tonight i want to focus on my kindergarten because she is who will be directly affected by the closure of K through 2nd.

[00:52:26] My daughter, she's bright, funny, and full of personality. In a traditional classroom, she can easily get distracted, but in a virtual environment, she is able to focus better and receive the attention that she needs. She participates, stays engaged, and is growing both academically and emotionally. This school and her teachers have made that difference.

[00:52:44] Their dedication, patience, and support have helped her grow. The structure and the environment here truly fits what she needs. It has also given me a peace of mind that she's learning in a safe environment and that really matters to me closing the kinder through second will take away an option that is clearly working for children like my daughter i respectfully ask you to consider the real impact this decision is having or will have on families like mine thank

[00:53:08] you for your time thank you speaker number seven speaker number eight good evening my name is marlene sherlock and our family lives in the fairfield district next week you'll be sending out your annual stakeholder survey i sincerely hope you'll be asking more pointed questions rather than the ones carefully crafted to elicit a positive reply and the answer you want to hear,

[00:53:46] but I doubt it. I imagine you'll get some interesting responses to the question if the school building is safe and in good condition, especially from the Carver, Montrose, and Mayberry communities. But there are other logistical things totally within your control that can dramatically affect the day-to-day experience in a school. Like, do the water fountains have filters out of date or machines themselves out of order altogether do students and staff have enough time during the day to go to the restroom are they even open or are they

[00:54:20] locked is the bus on time and the trip of a reasonable length do students have adequate transportation to be able to participate in before and after school activities is the drop off and pickup line managed well or is it consistently chaotic and time consuming are there enough parking spaces for students faculty and visitors and one of my favorites is the food good and nutritious and do they have enough time to eat bullying particularly cyber bullying was one of the most identified problems by students families and staff last year how about asking how

[00:55:00] the bell to bell ban is going and if it has helped when it comes to technology though i think we're in for a major reset the studies are piling up that ed tech ain't all that ai use for both learning and cheating, has no guardrails, and you are starting to graduate kids for whom you, as a school division, have given Google their online habits and information for their entire school career. Have mercy on our parental selves that we weren't loud enough to keep you from doing it. Our generation has winked and nodded enough that I'll bet if you asked

[00:55:38] students if they cared about their online privacy, they'd probably say no. We took that from them. Shame on us. Finally, even with generally worded questions, students indicated real issues with respect, rules, and discipline. Dig a little deeper to find out how so. Are profanity and discourteous behavior rampant? Ask if instruction time is cluttered with disruptions. What is it they say about a good lawyer in court? They never ask a question that they don't know the answer to.

[00:56:13] You say you want feedback, so how about for once you throw a little caution to the wind and ask specific and basic questions? Thank you. Thank you, speaker number eight, and thank you to all speakers who came out today.

[00:56:30] We appreciate the public feedback. We will now move on to item number eight, approval of the recommended annual financial plan for fiscal year 2027. Is there a motion to approve the recommended annual financial plan?

[00:56:48] I move that the school board approve the fiscal year 2027 recommended annual financial plan as presented. Motion by Mrs. Kinsella. Do I have a second? Second. Seconded by Mrs. Atkins. Now proceed with the roll call vote.

[00:57:05] Mrs. Kinsella? Aye. Mr. Young? Aye. Mrs. Atkins? Aye. Mrs. Shea? Aye. And I vote aye. THE AYES HAVE IT. THE FISCAL YEAR 2027 RECOMMENDED ANNUAL FINANCIAL PLAN IS APPROVED.

[00:57:21] WE WILL NOW MOVE ON TO THE APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT ITEMS. ARE THERE ANY REQUESTS FROM SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS THAT AN ITEM BE SEPARATED OR SCHOOL BOARD DISCUSSION AND OR INDIVIDUAL ACTION? HEARING NONE, IS THERE A MOTION? I MOVE THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD ACCEPT, ADOPT, APPROVED AND OR AWARD ITEMS 9.01 THROUGH 9.05 ON THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

[00:57:53] MOVED BY MR. YOUNG. DO I HAVE A SECOND? SECOND. SECONDED BY MS. KINSELA. I WILL PROCEED WITH A ROLL CALL VOTE. MS. KINSELA? AYE. MR. YOUNG? AYE. MS. ATKINS? AYE. MR. SHEA? AYE.

[00:58:10] I VOTE AYE. THE AYES HAVE IT ITEMS 9.01 THROUGH 9.05 ON THE CONSENT AGENDA ARE APPROVED. WE'LL NOW MOVE ON TO BOARD UNFINISHED BUSINESS. COLLEAGUES DO WE HAVE ANY UNFINISHED BUSINESS? HEARING NONE we'll move on to new business. Colleagues, do we have any new business for the board? We'll move on to the announcement of the future meeting dates. The school board's next meeting will be a work session on Thursday, March 12th, 2026 at 3 p.m. Meeting of times may be adjusted as needed.

[00:58:48] This meeting is adjourned.



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